

**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING**

February 24, 2011

**TESTIMONY OF
THE PALACE THEATER
&
CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
CAPA - SHUBERT THEATER
&
THE STAMFORD CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

FRANK TAVERA

Good evening members of the Committee. My name is Frank Tavera and I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Palace Theater in Waterbury. Elissa Getto is the Executive Director of the Stamford Center for the Arts who is out of the state this week and sends her regrets.

JOHN FISHER

My name is John Fisher and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for the Performing Arts (CAPA) and the Shubert Theater in New Haven.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank you for the support you have expressed for the Palace Theater in Waterbury, the Shubert Theater in New Haven and the Stamford Center for the Arts. The Palace, Shubert and Stamford Center are three of our nation's most significant and important theaters. Your support has enabled these three key theaters and arts centers to continue, maintain, and expand its programming, education and community outreach activities.

FRANK

As we have always stated, Arts organizations such as the Palace, Shubert and Stamford Center are critical to improving the quality of life in cities and towns. Not only do we present the highest quality of entertainment, we enrich the lives of those around us and we actively work to enhance the educational opportunities for young students in public schools. And although our mission is to have a positive impact on the lives of those in the community, the positive financial impact we have on the State economy is a message that often goes untold.

Using Results Based Accountability, last year more than 300,000 people attended events at our three theaters. The Palace, Shubert and Stamford Center provide over \$20 million in annual economic impact to our regions, based on the American for the Arts calculator.

As leading arts organizations in Connecticut, in the past five years our theaters have provided over 100 million dollars in total economic impact to the state, along with presenting and hosting over 1500 events with more than 1.2 million attendees, generating ticket sales of over 50 million dollars.

Collectively we are responsible for over 7,000 hotel room nights a year generating \$900,000 in hotel bookings and nearly \$160,000 in hotel taxes which is direct tax revenue for the State. As you can see, an investment in the arts is a good investment for the State.

JOHN

We understand the severe challenges the state and everyone is facing at the moment. We have each taken steps to deal with the economic situation by actively reducing our expenses and at times our work force as well.

Together our theaters in Stamford, Waterbury and New Haven employ over 600 part time event staff and have over 700 volunteers. Annually, the state receives \$150,000 in payroll taxes from full and part time employees, and an additional \$200,000 in sales and entertainment tax revenue for the state.

With all of the challenges with the state budget, we understand the need for all of us to bear the burden. Over the past three years our state funding has been reduced by 23%.

FRANK

Fiscal support from the state ensures that these three theater's lights continue to shine, and more importantly that these cultural treasures provides an important and positive economic impact for their regions and the entire state of Connecticut.

Thank you very much.